

A Puzzling Vacation

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Summary: My very first fan fic! Harry, Ron, and Hermione go to Hawaii for vacation and meet a puzzling girl named Laura. They start to wonder if Laura is really telling them everything about herself... Please read and review!

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This is my very first story so please don't flame me! I've been reviewing stories for a while now, but just recently I decided to join FFN as an author. This has been sitting around in my files for a long time, and just recently I took out and edited it a bit. Also, don't mind the bad title. I couldn't figure out what to name this, and finally the title A Puzzling Vacation popped into my head and I decided to use it, despite how boring it is. I'm new to this so it the formatting isn't quite right, please bear with me! =) Please review!

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"Well, this must be it. Seashell Hotel." Harry decided as he stared up at the white building surrounded by rustling palm trees and fragrant tropical flowers. In the background, the sounds of the ocean could be heard as it splashed onto the sandy beach,

"It's gorgeous!" Hermione agreed as she took in a deep breath of the sweet air.

"It sure was nice of your parents to take us all on your vacation, Hermione," said Ron, grinning at her.

"Oh I know! I begged them and begged them! I kept telling mom and dad about how much you two would just love to see Hawaii!" Hermione was so excited that she was practically bouncing up and down.

"Are you three coming?" called Mrs. Granger. She smiled as she poked

her head out of the hotel door.

"Oh yeah!" Harry broke away from his daydream and snatched up his suitcase, then he and his friends hurried inside.

The lobby was just as beautiful as the outside. The large windows looked out across the ocean and flowers were spilling out of pots. Paintings of airy, tropical scenes decorated the walls.

"Excuse me," said Mr. Granger, stepping up to the reception desk, "I'm Mr. Granger and I have reservations for five here."

The lady at the counter consulted her computer screen. "Yes, we've been expecting you," she said, flashing a smile. She handed a lei to each person in the group.

"It's tradition to give leis to all the guests at the Seashell Hotel," she explained.

Hermione immediately put her flowered garland on, but Harry and Ron glanced at each other, each looking as though they wanted nothing to do with wearing flowers.

"Oh come on! Put it on!" Hermione exclaimed with a giggle. She grabbed Harry's and thrust it over his head. "It looks great!"

"That depends on what you consider to be great," Harry muttered with a grimace. He took off the lei and stuffed it into his back pocket when Hermione had turned her back.

Five minutes later the party had made their way to their tropical-themed rooms. Mr. Granger, Mrs. Granger and Hermione shared a room across the hall from Harry and Ron. Hermione was currently visiting the two boys in their room.

"This place is so hot!" Ron gasped, as he fell onto his bed.

"Of course it is, Silly! We're near the equator after all! It's hotter at the equator becauseâ€œ"

"Skip the explanation this time, Hermione. I don't want to have anything to do with education while I'm on my summer vacation!"

The next day, after breakfast, as Harry and his friends were going back up to their room, they were so wrapped up in their conversation about what they were planning to do that day that they nearly ran headlong into a girl who was dragging a suitcase through the hall.

"Whoops! Sorry, I didn't see you!" Harry apologized after walking right into her.

The tan, blond girl spun around. "Oh that's ok," she said shyly. "I just got here and I'm taking my things up to my room."

"So did we. We arrived yesterday." Ron told her.

"Do you need any help? That suitcase looks kinda heavy," Hermione volunteered.

"It is!" she said the girl, "By the way, my name is Laura."

"Hi Laura. I'm Hermione, and this is Ron, and this is Harry."

"Harry?" Laura asked immediately, looking up.

"Yeah, that's me," Harry said with a grin. It was so nice sometimes in the Muggle world where he wasn't such a celebrity and could go about as he pleased without people staring avidly at his scar. It didn't matter right now anyway, since he was wearing a cap that covered his scar completely.

The girl, seeming to have lost interest, merely said, "Oh. So where's your room? Mine is just down this hall."

"So is Harry's and mine!" Ron told her. "It's room number 125."

"Oh cool! That makes us neighbors! Mine is 126!"

After helping Laura bring her luggage to her room, the girl sank heavily down on her bed and said with a sigh, "Whew! I'm exhausted! Are you three staying here alone?"

"No, we're staying with Hermione's parents," Harry explained, gesturing toward Hermione. "Who are you staying with?"

"Well, actually, it's just me. My family is friends with the owners of this hotel and I come here every summer."

"Really? That's neat." Hermione said dreamily, "I would love to visit Hawaii every summer! Do you want any help unpacking?" She started towards the suitcase nearest her.

Laura made a startled motion. "No thanks!" she said quickly, and then as though to change the subject, she said, "It is fun staying here each year, though it does get a bit boring after you've been here as many times as I have!"

"Well, we'd better be going I guess," Harry said, "See you tomorrow!"

Laura grinned, "Ok!"

Once back in their own room, Ron said, "Well, that Laura seems friendly enough. For a Muggle I mean."

"Yeah," Harry agreed, "She seemed a little odd though."

"What d'ya mean?"

"I dunno. It's probably just me."

Hermione pushed open their door.

"Are you slow-pokes ready to go to the beach?" she asked. She had changed into her swimsuit and was wearing a towel knotted around her waist like a skirt.

Ron jumped off the bed, "Sheesh! Be patient Hermione! C'mon Harry,

let's get our stuff ready."

"Should I ask Laura if she wants to join us?" Hermione asked.

"Go ahead," Harry mumbled, as he dug through his drawer.

Hermione hurried over to Laura's door and knocked. Laura was a minute in answering.

"Yes? Oh hi Hermione!"

"Hi Laura. Harry, Ron, and I were wondering if you wanted to come to the beach with us."

Laura smiled. "Sure! I'll meet you out front in a few minutes."

"Ok," Hermione agreed.

Ten minutes later the group had arrived at the sandy stretch of land. Ron and Harry hurried into the water to get some relief from the stifling heat, but Hermione and Laura sat talking on a towel spread out on the sand right next to the shoreline.

"Where do you go to school?" Laura asked Hermione.

"Up in Britain. You wouldn't have heard of it."

"Oh. My school is in the states."

"Mmmm," Hermione said absentmindedly as she took a sip of water from the bottle she had brought along.

Just then a wave of salty water fell over her. She and Laura instantly looked up and saw Harry and Ron splashing water at them and laughing their heads off.

"So that's how you two want to play, eh?" Hermione asked, grinning at Laura. Both girls dashed into the water and splashed back a counter-attack.

By the time they had returned to the hotel, it was late afternoon and all four of them were starving.

"How bout getting a snack from the vending machine in the lobby?" Harry asked.

"Fine by me," Ron said, "I'm famished!" He leaned closer to Harry and Hermione and said in an undertone, "But I don't have any Muggle money with me."

"Neither do I," Harry said, and looked at Hermione.

"All I have is British money." Then she giggled, "Silly of me not to think of picking up some American money from mum and dad before setting out!"

"Do you have any money?" Harry asked Laura.

"Ummmâ€¦" Laura reached into her pocket and pulled out a leather

wallet. When she opened it, a gold coin fell to the floor. Laura quickly stooped to retrieve it. Harry, Ron, and Hermione stared at her with puzzled expressions.

"It's a foreign coin," Laura explained, "Very valuable. Mom and dad would kill me if I lost it!" She dug through her wallet for a moment before pulling out a few dollars.

"This ought to be enough," she said, "C'mon."

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The next day turned out to be very wet and rainy. Laura had invited Harry, Ron, and Hermione to her room, and they all sat talking.

"Does it rain here a lot?" Harry asked Laura.

"Sometimes," Laura replied. "What's it like in Britain?"

"It's nice," said Hermione.

For some reason, Harry, Ron, and Hermione were having a bit of a difficult time finding things to talk about with Laura since she was a Muggle and of course knew nothing of the magical world.

"What do youâ€" Laura began but at that moment a small green toad that had apparently been inside of Laura's pocket choose to hop out.

"Prince! Get back here!" Laura cried, trying to catch it as it jumped from the bed to the nightstand.

"You have a \_toad\_?" Harry asked, staring. He had never met a Muggle who kept a toad as a pet.

"Oh, yes. My family loves animals and I think Prince is cute!" Laura told him, as she chased after the toad.

"I have a cat," Hermione said proudly, "and he's \_adorable\_!"

"I wouldn't exactly call him adorable," Ron muttered under his breath.

Laura jumped and clamped her hands around the tiny toad that had been sitting on the lamp. Then she turned to Hermione. "My family has a cat too, but I didn't bring her. Tiger is always getting into mischief! She causes even more trouble than Prince!"

At that moment a tapping on the window caused everyone to turn their heads. There was Hedwig, Harry's owl, clutching a letter in her claws.

"Oh no! Not here in front of a Muggle!" Harry moaned in an undertone.

Laura looked just as upset as Harry. "Shoo!" she cried, swatting the window, "Shoo!"

And Hedwig did just that. She ruffled her feathers then turned around

and flew off, looking very indigent.

"I'm terrified of owls," Laura explained, taking a deep breath, "I've always been scared of birds for as long as I can remember. Funny seeing one here in Hawaii, eh?" She sounded a bit uneasy.

"Maybe it escaped from a zoo or something," Hermione offered, casting a glance at Harry and Ron.

"That's probably it," Laura agreed.

"We'd better go now," said Harry. He motioned for Hermione and Ron to follow.

"Okay. See you later!" Laura called as they left.

Back in their own room, Harry sighed with relief, "That was close! Nice cover-up, Hermione!"

Hermione beamed.

Harry threw open the window. "Hedwig! Where are you Hedwig?" he called. It was only a few moments before the snowy white bird came soaring into sight. She flew into the room and dropped the letter on Harry's bed.

Picking it up, Harry saw whom it was from.

"It's from Sirius!" he exclaimed happily. Tearing it open, he read it aloud.

—

Dear Harry,

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm still in hiding, but Buckbeak has been very nice company. I'm also still searching for Pettigrew. Don't worry though. I'll catch up to him eventually and I'll be able to prove my innocence. Then hopefully we can find a place to live together. Personally, I'd like a home near Hogsmeade so that way we'd be near Hogwarts and there would be plenty of wizarding shops close by.

In your last letter you told me you'd be vacationing in Hawaii with your friends Ron and Hermione. I hope you enjoy your visit there. Say hello to Ron and Hermione for me and I hope to see you soon!

Love,

Sirius

—

Putting down the letter, Harry grinned broadly. "I really hope he catches Pettigrew soon!"

"Me too," Ron said nodded vigorously.

Hermione, meanwhile, was sitting quietly, as though deep in

thought.

"What are you thinking about?" Harry asked, noticing her.

Hermione looked up. "Oh nothing. It's nothing. Just a theory of mine."

Ron stared at her. "A theory?"

Hermione nodded. "Yes. It's probably wrong so just forget it."

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> > The next day was bright and sunny.

"Perfect weather to explore the area!" Ron said happily.

"Should we bring Laura along again?" questioned Harry; "She seemed nice."

"Why not? Go get Laura and Hermione and tell them to meet us in the lobby."

"Okay." Harry pushed open the door and walked into the hallway. "Hermione? Are you in there?" he called, knocking on the door across the hall.

Hermione opened the door. "What is it?" she asked.

"Ron and I are going to explore the area. Wanna come?"

"Sure!" Hermione turned so that she faced back into her room, "Mum, dad, I'm going out with Harry and Ron again."

"All right, sweetie." Mrs. Granger hardly looked up from the magazine she was reading.

Hermione stepped out into the hall to join Harry.

"Will you ask Laura if she wants to come?" Harry asked, gesturing toward her door.

"All right."

"Great! Ron and I'll be in the lobby."

Hermione turned around and knocked on Laura's door. "It's me, Hermione!" she called.

Hermione heard a scuffling from inside Laura's room. A moment later, Laura flung open the door, looking slightly flustered.

"Hi Hermione." She bit her lip. "You know, about that owl yesterday?"

But Hermione cut her short. "Listen, Harry, Ron, and I were planning to look around the area and we were wondering if you wanted to come."

Laura's face broke into a relieved smile. "Oh is that all? Sure, I'd love to! Erâ€|hang on a sec. I want to bring along my camera. You can come in if you want." Laura held the door open wider.

"Sure." Hermione stepped inside and glanced around. Several books were haphazardly stacked on the dresser at the other end of the room. Upon closer inspection, Hermione noted that they were quite thick and a few of them seemed fairly old. They reminded her of some of the books in the Hogwarts library.

Noticing what Hermione was doing, Laura hurried forward, scooped up all the books, then threw them into a drawer.

"Just some books, you know," she said, laughing slightly uneasily. "You wouldn't be interested in them."

"Oh, but I love reading!" Hermione told her spiritedly.

"Wellâ€|well, you wouldn't understand those books anyway," Laura dug through her suitcase. "Where is that camera?" she muttered to herself.

Hermione glanced around again. "Laura," she said, giggling, "it's on the bed."

"Oh!" Laura grabbed it. "All right, let's go!"

"Finally!" exclaimed Harry when the two girls appeared. "What took you so long?"

"I was looking for my camera," Laura explained.

Soon, the four of them were strolling along the sidewalk.

"Aren't these shops neat?" Laura pointed to a small building selling leis and necklaces made out of shells to tourists.

"Mmm hmm," Harry agreed.

"Laura," Hermione said suddenly, "Where exactly do you go to school?"

Laura seemed taken aback. "What? Oh, just a school in the US like I told you before. Why do you ask?" She bit her lip.

"I'm just curious."

"Oh, I seeâ€|"

"What's your favorite subject?" Hermione pressed.

Ron and Harry stared quizzically at Hermione. Why was she suddenly so interested in Laura and what Laura did?

Laura took a moment in answering. "Wellâ€|what's your favorite subject?"

"I like them all!"

> "Ohâ€|I guess I do too."<p>



They walked in silence for a few minutes until they reached a park filled with palm trees and tropical flowers.

"I think I'm going to take a rest," Harry said as he flopped down underneath the tallest tree.

"Me too," Ron stretched out on the grass.

At that moment, the hoot of an owl was heard. Everyone looked upwards and saw a tawny brown owl flying overhead. It appeared to be clutching a large envelope; then it swooped down and landed next to Laura.

"Oh no!" Ron moaned, glancing over at the Muggle girl.

Laura too, looked upset. She leapt up and cried, "Shoo! Get away from here! Go over to the hotel or something! Just go away!"

Harry and Ron stared. Hermione however had a sort of know-it-all expression on her face.

"I'm deathly afraid of owls! I just can't stand them!" Laura's cheeks were flushed. "Well, I've gotta go! Nice walking with you!" She started hurrying back toward Seashell Hotel in the same direction that owl had flown.

"What on earthâ€" " Harry stared after her.

Hermione jumped up and started running after Laura.

"Hermione! Where are you going?"

"Back to the hotel! You two stay here!"

> Since Laura had gotten a head start, she reached Seashell Hotel before Hermione, and was already in her room by the time Hermione got there.<p>

When Hermione arrived, she dashed up to Laura's door and knocked.

"Who is it?" by the sound of Laura's voice she was clearly out of breath.

"Hermione. Can I come in?"

"I don't thinkâ€" "

But Hermione had already pushed open the door. There was Laura, sitting on the floor with the tawny owl perched nearby, and a letter clutched in her hands. Her suitcase had fallen open and spellbooks, a wand, and a few chocolate frogs were among some of the items scattered on the floor.

"Hermione!" Laura sound near hysteric, "I can explainâ€" " she shook her head, her face turning crimson, as she swept up the items covering the floor and thrust the letter into her pocket.

"I knew it!" Hermione was positively beaming.

"Look, this isn't what it seems!" Laura was so flustered, that while trying to put everything back in her suitcase, she instead caused more items to spill out, one of which was the front page of The Daily Prophet, which proclaimed in big bold letters, "\*\*\*Ministry of Magic Experiments with New Wands\*\*\*". Below the words was a picture of Cornelius Fudge, who was moving about, as all people in magical pictures do.

"\_Hermione! I can explain!\_" Laura seemed close to tears as she snatched up the paper and crumpled it into a ball.

As much as Laura looked terrified, Hermione looked calm. She simply surveyed the mess on the floor, then replied, "You'd better clean all this up before a Muggle walks by and sees it!" Hermione gestured to the open door; "I could just imagine what they would think if they saw all your spellbooks, and newspapers with pictures of moving people!"

> Laura stared, open-mouthed.<p>

"Hermione, howâ€|howâ€|"

Hermione laughed and said with a smile, "I'm a witch too! I figured out that you were one simply by putting two and two together!"

> Laura sighed with immense relief. "Seriously? You're not a Muggle?"<p>

"Nope. My parents are, but not me."

"Really? I'm Muggle-born too!"

> Hermione grinned. "Harry and Ron will certainly be surprised! They have no idea that you're from the wizarding world!"<br> Laura suddenly looked up. "That Harryâ€|he isn't Harry Potter is he?"

Hermione grinned. "Actually he is!"

Laura's eyes grew wide. "You mean I've actually talked to the Harry Potter!?"

Hermione smiled. "Of course!"

"Butâ€|butâ€|but I didn't know that he was Harry Potterâ€|" Laura sputtered.

"And we didn't know that you weren't a Muggle! C'mon. Let's clean this mess up before a real Muggle sees all this stuff!"

She helped Laura put everything back into the suitcase and then Laura's owl flew out the window, heading for it's home. By the time they were finished it was impossible to tell that the room was inhabited by a witch.

Just as they had finished, Harry and Ron came up the hallway and into Laura's room.

"What are you two doing?" Ron demanded.

"What was that all about?" Harry surveyed the two girls suspiciously. "Leaving us like that?"

At the sight of Harry, Laura turned beat red.

"Sheesh!" said Hermione, "I was just helping Laura tidy up her room and I was telling her all about our last year at Hogwartsâ€" "

"You were \_what\_?" Harry gasped

"She was quite surprised to learn that you had an invisibility cloak, Harry," Hermione went on calmly, as Laura grinned at the shocked look on the boy's faces, "Because she's never seen an invisibility cloak in her lifeâ€" "

"Of course she hasn't!" Ron exclaimed, "She's aâ€" "

"And she was positively speechless when I told her about Harry's Firebolt. Laura is a big fan of Quidditch, but she only has a Cleansweepâ€" "

"What'da ya mean she's a big fan of Quidditch and she has a Cleansweep?" Harry demanded.

Both Hermione and Laura burst out laughing.

"I'm a witch!" Laura blurted out, "and Hermione told me that you thought I was a Muggle, while all this time I though \_you \_three were Muggles!"

Ron and Harry stared, speechless. Finally Harry said, "Well, it's a small world after all, isn't it? I never would've guessed

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I know it was a bit obvious that Laura was a witch and that Ron or Harry could have easily figured it out too, but like I said before, this is my very first fan fic. Please review!

End
file.